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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 003790

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: KURDISH PARTIES FIRE BLAST AT THEIR COALITION
PARTNER, PRIME MINISTER JAFARI

Classified By: (U) Classified by PolCouns Robert Ford,
reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary: Recent letters from President Talabani and Kurdish President Barzani show the extent of unhappiness inside the ruling coalition of Kurdish and Shia Islamist parties. The Kurds in their latest letter hinted at withdrawing from the coalition, although the author of the letter, Deputy Prime Minister Shaways, said such a withdrawal is unlikely in the immediate future. End Summary.

2. (C) There are new signs of unhappiness in the Kurdish political marriage with the Shia Islamist Coalition that comprises the Iraqi Government. Deputy Prime Minister Rowsch Shaways shared with us September 11 a copy of letter he said Iraqi President Talabani and Kurdish Regional Government President Barzani had sent to Prime Minister Jafari. Rowsch said the letter had been sent to Jafari earlier this month. In the list the Kurdish leaders allege that the Jafari government has ignored the April 2005 agreement between the Shia and Kurdish political coalitions, in particular by:

-- not including the Kurdish ministers in developing consensus on important political, economic and security policy decisions;

-- appointing top government jobs all from the Prime Minister's party, including the Secretary General of the Cabinet, the Government spokesman, directors general and counselors at the Prime Ministry and top employees in the ministries;

-- not ensuring "balance" in the composition of delegations sent abroad;

-- not ensuring "balance" in the distribution of development projects and not consulting the Kurdish Alliance on how government reconstruction funds would be spent;

-- not bringing the Presidency Council, leadership of the Transitional National Assembly and the Prime Ministry together for consultative meetings;

-- not developing consensus on the policies adopted by independent commissions, such as the de-Baathification commission and the Iraq Property Claims Commission;

-- not stopping "crimes" committed against Sunni Arabs even while combatting terrorism vigorously;

-- not "normalizing" the situation in Kirkuk and not providing funds for the Kirkuk Committee to do its work.

3. (C) The letter concludes with the ominous threat that if these problems continue, the Kurds will need to take "another step" in line with their agreement from April. PolCouns asked Shaways if he thought the Kurdish Alliance would actually withdraw from the governing coalition. Shaways said that such a withdrawal is not imminent, but he would not rule it out eventually.

4. (C) This letter follows two others earlier this year from President Talabani (not co-signed by Barzani) to Jafari. Jafari aide Adnan Ali al-Kadhimi on August 29 showed PolCouns the second letter, sent August 27, in which Talabani told Jafari that Talabani should speak at both high-level events at the UN in New York this month. (Comment: Talabani's language in the letter was quite blunt, telling Jafari that since Jafari had not organized his own trip in early August, Talabani had organized his own visit to the UN instead and Jafari should stay away from the UN. End Comment.) According to Kadhimi, the letter's tone had infuriated Jafari. For this reason, Kadhimi said, Jafari had refused to attend the August 29 ceremony hosted by Talabani to mark the formal presentation of the draft constitution to the Transitional National Assembly. Kadhimi noted that Talabani has to understand that his role is a distant second to that of the Prime Minister, according to the Transition Law. PolCouns underlined that the two men must coordinate and their failure to do so frequently causes problems not only for

Iraq but for Iraq's friends. PolCouns in particular chided Kadhim for the Prime Minister not attending the constitution ceremony at a time when leadership unity is especially urgent. Kadhim accepted the points but promised no change.

15. (C) Comment: As we have reported, the political marriage between the Kurdish Alliance and the Shia Coalition was never a happy one. The Kurds were especially unenthusiastic about Jafari being Prime Minister. In addition, Talabani is especially sensitive to perceived slights, and his relationship with Jafari is very difficult; the two men hardly speak and even their aides hardly speak. This new letter from Talabani and Barzani probably angered Jafari and his team further but probably won't change the dynamics of the Iraqi Transitional Government very much.
Satterfield